

e-Bugle

Garrett Bugle Internet Edition

Volume 59

December 2012

No. 10



Calendar

Fri., Nov. 23	Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place		sion with representatives to
Fri., Nov. 30	Montgomery Potters, Town Hall, 2–9 pm		County Council and state legis-
Sat., Dec. 1	GIVES collection, Penn Place lobby, 9 am–1 pm; Montgomery Potters, Town Hall, 10 am–5 pm	Sat., Dec. 8	lature; see p 3 (no Casual Music Jam)
Sun., Dec. 2	Montgomery Potters, Town Hall, 12 noon–4 pm; Garrett Park Elementary Chorus sings at Veterans Park in Bethesda, afternoon	Tues., Dec. 11	Santa comes to Garrett Park, Town Hall, 2 pm (p 6, poster)
Mon., Dec. 3	Monthly yard waste collection	Fri., Dec. 14	Lunch Bunch, Town Hall, 12:30 pm; <i>Bugle</i> deadline, 4 pm
Thurs., Dec. 6	Early Town Council meeting: 7 pm, dessert reception, discus-	Thurs., Dec. 20	30th Annual Do-it-Yourself Car-ol-fest, Town Hall, 7:30 pm (p 3)
		Fri., Dec. 21	Casual Music Jam, Town Hall, 8 pm
			Pick up your <i>Bugle</i> at Penn Place

Utilitarian

The air was thick with testosterone at November's Town Council meeting, as the he-men who do utility work around town gathered to talk to us about scheduling issues. As we took our seats, a sea of baritone voices rose up, punctuated by the rattle of keys on key chains hanging outside of pants.

There being no Citizen Presentations, the Mayor thanked the guys for showing up and said that the town needed "advance knowledge" of repair and other activities, that there have been problems with different utility work going on at the same time, that only notifying residents is inadequate (the town also needs to know), and that a closer relationship with the utilities can also mean we handle emergencies better. "The town government needs to know what's going ON, so when citizens complain to us—they don't call you; they call us—we know what to say."

Peter Benjamin offered an example from earlier that day. The WSSC was here repairing our roads—which is great. This saves us money, assures high quality, etc. But three main roads in town were suddenly blocked, and nobody knew that was going to happen. Another example:

Recently, WSSC and Washington Gas didn't coordinate, so a newly paved road was dug up.

The Mayor was clear that "we don't want to get in the way of any emergency work. We just want to be informed of planned projects."

Jack Mandel added that utilities sometimes start work and then mysteriously suspend it, often for long periods of time. Equipment may be left in the street.

Ted Pratt asked that utilities not mark our sidewalks. "Feel free to put paint on our roads, but not on our sidewalks."

In response to the Mayor's request for annual plans, all of the representatives at the meeting said that the nature of their work precluded notification that far in advance. Here are some comments from the guys.

Verizon: "Happy Veterans Day to all the vets in the audience. Most of our work is based on the demands of our customers plus regular routine maintenance. We often don't have what you're looking for in terms of long-term advance notice. For big jobs, we can alert Garrett Park with good lead time. Six months in advance is doable."

(continued next page)

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Washington Gas: “We apologize for the inconvenience you’ve undergone. We also could do six months in advance for most things. You may know that Garrett Park is one of the first sites of the biggest pipe replacement project in our history. We’ve now assigned two people to be community outreach to let you know what’s going on. And hey. I didn’t know about your post office. No home delivery. Wow.”

WSSC: “We recently contacted residents on Weymouth to request easements.” Peter asked that the town be informed that WSSC is asking people for easements. WSSC said okay.

Comcast: “New service or repair work after storms is basically what we do. The nature of our business is that things change rapidly. For digging work, we go through the county and its procedures. It’s important for us to know that we’re failing to alert people here adequately.”

Pepco: “Most of our work is preceded by letters to our customers. But clearly we need to do more. It’s virtually impossible to put together a one-year plan. But we do have some work in town tentatively scheduled for 2013, and we’ll share that with you.”

Basically this whole exchange was about our providing them with a point of contact (the Town Administrator) and their providing us with ongoing information via contact people on their side.

On their way out, all the guys approached the Council and gave everyone cards and chatted a bit.

The remaining business involved the Council voting in favor of placing some town funds in low-activity savings accounts in order to get greater return on our money, and the Council discussing the search process for Ted Pratt’s replacement. Tara Flynn led the search discussion and asked the crucial questions. Do we want to hire a search firm? They’re expensive, but they have experience and contacts and the ability to give full-time attention to the matter. Do we want to solicit citizen ideas about what’s important to them in a Town Administrator? (Answer: Yes.) How much of this can the Council do on its own, thereby paying less to a firm? Should we adopt

a hybrid approach, in which we do what we can, and give other elements of the search to a firm? (Everyone liked this idea.)

Jack Mandel, Tara Flynn, and Hans Wegner will be the search committee. The Mayor noted that the Council will need to have a series of work sessions devoted to Ted’s replacement.

Margaret Soltan

Visit Garrett Park’s Web site:

www.garrettpark-md.gov

Art at Penn Place

The work of Emilie McBride is on display at Penn Place until December 2. Emilie McBride is a watercolorist whose work reflects her love of plants and landscapes developed over the past two decades as a landscape designer. The beauty of the natural world and the play of light on various forms have long fascinated and inspired her.

As a child she loved to draw and paint, and she has developed her skills by taking classes with various teachers at the Art League in Alexandria, Virginia. Emilie exhibits with Salon 8, and is a juried member of the Potomac Valley Watercolorists and the Miniature Painters, Sculptors and Engravers Society of Washington, DC.

Birds, boxes, and a little Latin. December 2 marks the opening of an all-new Jane Salomon art exhibit. This exhibit will feature small paintings on illustration board with use of gold leaf, larger watercolor paintings of flowers with their Latin names and small boxes topped with original paintings of birds or flowers, perfect for holiday presents.

Jane has spent the last two years experimenting with different approaches to her watercolor and acrylic paintings, using a variety of supports and additional media. This show reflects the best of the experiments, and she continues to value the opportunity that Garrett Park offers to her and other artists to experiment and show their work. There will be a champagne and chocolate reception on December 2 from 3 to 5 pm, on the balcony at Penn Place.

Bert Zbar

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The *Garrett Bugle* is a publication of the Citizens Association of Garrett Park, published 10 times a year. Publication of the *Bugle* is supported by member dues. All residents of Garrett Park are members of the Citizens Association. Yearly dues (\$20 per family or \$10 per individual per address) can be sent to Citizens Association, Box 456, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

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First-class subscriptions cost \$15 (bulk mail subscriptions are no longer available). Letters to the editor can be submitted by mail or hand to *Bugle* staff or by e-mail through the town Web site: www.garrettpark-md.gov/submit-BugleArticle.php. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions for length and clarity. Unsigned letters will not be printed.

Town Administrator Notes

Early Council meeting. The December Town Council meeting will be held on Thursday, December 6, at 7 pm (rather than on the usual second Monday date and time). It will begin with a dessert reception and discussion between town residents and our representatives to the County Council and state legislature, with state representatives from both districts 17 (current) and 18 (new) attending.

Holiday gifts. If any resident would like to make a holiday gift to the five men who take away our trash, recycling, and yard waste, please mail your check to PO Box 84, or drop it off at the Town Office. Checks should be made payable to Garrett Park with "Holiday Fund" written in the memo section. Donations are fully tax-deductible. We will handle this the same way as we have in past years. The town will send each contributor an acknowledgement and will see that the fund is properly distributed the week before Christmas.

Holiday collection of trash, recycling, & yard waste. Thanksgiving Day trash collection will be on the following Monday (Nov. 26). Yard waste will be collected on the first Mondays in the next three months (December 3, January 7, and February 4). We will return to weekly Monday collection of yard waste in March.

January Christmas tree collection. Please put your trees out for collection with the January yard waste on Monday, January 7, if possible. Otherwise, put them out as you take them down, and town staff will come around and chip them. Please try to have the trees out by the following Monday (Jan. 14). Drying trees are a fire hazard! All Christmas trees collected are recycled.

Large item pickup. The next large item pickup will be on Saturday, January 5.

Construction projects. The Mayor and Council are considering what the next projects should be in their current review of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Any input from residents is welcome. Contact the Town Office for more information.

Leaves & traffic. The leaves are falling thick and fast now, and big piles are appearing at the roadside. Please ask your children not to play in piles along the street. Motorists please use extra care and keep your speed down. Leaf-rakers, please try to keep your piles as narrow as possible so as not to restrict the flow of traffic unduly.

Town Hall rentals. The Town Hall continues to be very much in demand. Residents who wish to reserve it for events should plan well ahead in order to reserve a date and avoid disappointment. Call the Town Office to make a reservation.

Montgomery County Volunteer Center. Every year the MCVC compiles a listing of ways to help others during the holiday season. To donate time, money, or gifts, please call the Volunteer Center at 240-777-2600 or visit the Web site at www.montgomeryserves.org (or e-mail volunteer@montgomerycountymd.gov).

Elizabeth, Jose, Butch, and Frank join me in wishing all town residents a fine Thanksgiving. As always, if you have questions, concerns, or just want to chat, please feel free to stop by the office any time, or call 301-933-7488.

Ted Pratt, Town Administrator

Start the Holidays in Song

We'll supply the music, and you supply the voices for the 30th Annual Do-it-Yourself Carolfest, to be held in the Town Hall on Friday, December 14, at 7:30 pm. The songs will include a mixture of sacred and secular music. The first half will be geared towards the children, so that after refreshments the younger participants can leave and the serious singers can continue with some harder music in four-part harmony. Doug Mader will lead all the sweet sounding voices that will open the holiday season in rousing song. If possible, please bring some nibbles, sweet or salty, for everyone to munch on at intermission. Liquid refreshments (nonalcoholic) will be provided.

Mary Moyer



Garrett Park Film Society

The Garrett Park Film Society plans another year of great films from around the world. The 2013 season includes films from Japan, China, Germany, and Italy, as well as the U.S. Comedies, dramas, documentaries, classics, and hidden gems will all be accompanied by great meals inspired by the setting or the period of the film shown. Mark your calendar now.

Become a member and support this unique community activity. Basic membership entitles you to free admission and coupons good for sodas and snacks. Higher levels of membership lead to even more rewards.

2013 Series

January 11: *Mid-August Lunch* (Italian, comedy, 2008). While everyone else plans a summer holiday out of town, Gianni, in debt and whose only job is caring for his elderly mother, is offered an opportunity he can't refuse. A movie for foodies.

February 22: *Last Train Home* (Chinese, documentary, 2009). Every year 130 million Chinese migrant workers return home to family and children for New Year. Following two of these migrants, the film documents the impact of these long separations on families and traditional Chinese values.

March 22: *Bringing Up Baby* (USA, comedy, 1938). A screwball comedy of the highest order, starring Cary Grant and Katherine Hepburn. A bumbling paleontologist seeking \$1 million dol-

lars for his research encounters a flighty heiress and her pet leopard, Baby.

April 26: *Rebecca* (USA, mystery, romance, 1940). Directed by Alfred Hitchcock, starring Laurence Olivier and Joan Fontaine. A classic in every sense.

June 21: *Lost in America* (USA, comedy, 1985). After failing to get an expected promotion, David (Albert Brooks) convinces his wife Linda (Julie Hagerty) that they should sell everything and go on the road à la Easy Rider ... only in a Winnebago. What could go wrong?

September 20: *Jiro Dreams of Sushi* (Japanese, documentary, 2011). Eighty-five-year-old sushi master Jiro Ono's quest is to create the perfect piece of sushi. But is this the dream of his son, who is in line to take over Jiro's legendary Tokyo restaurant?

October 18: *The Tunnel* (German, 2001). Based on a true story. Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, there were few ways for East Berliners to escape to the West. In 1961, right after the wall was erected, a group of people on the West side of the Wall come up with a plan to be reunited with family and lovers on the East side.

November 8: *Smoke Signals* (USA, 1998). A classic road movie with a twist. Two young Indians from an Idaho reservation have little in common, but they must make a trip to Phoenix together. Along the way they learn a lot about each other, and we learn a lot about their culture.

Garrett Park Film Society, 2013 Series

Yes! I want to be a member.

Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Do you prefer mailings by U.S. post ____or e-mail ____?

Check the level of membership you want below. All levels include admission to all films and coupons that can be used for soft drinks, popcorn (when available), and nuts. Higher memberships receive more coupons.

Make check payable to "Garrett Park Film Society" or "GPFS."

Mail form and check to Suzanne Grefsheim, GPFS Treasurer, Box 175, Garrett Park, MD 20896.

- [] **Gaffer, Single** \$30 (5 coupons)
- [] **Gaffer, Family** \$50 (10 coupons)
- [] **Screenwriter** \$100 (20 coupons)
- [] **Film Sponsor** \$250 (20 coupons; reserved front row seats for sponsored film; acknowledgement of your support)
- [] **Director** \$300 (20 coupons; one glass of wine or beer per film)
- [] **Producer** \$500 (20 coupons; free dinner for two for each film shown in 2013)

Seeing Red Dots in Porcupine Woods?

On Sunday, November 11, the Porcupine Woods Subcommittee of the Parks and Open Space Committee walked through the Woods with the town’s consulting arborist, Phil Normandy, to get his assessment of what should be done with the debris and downed trees that have littered the woodland floor since this June’s *derecho*, as well as how best to curb invasive plants that have choked out native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. Like Hansel and Gretel he left a trail—not of breadcrumbs, but of red dots to guide us to those plants and trees most in need of removal.

Phil recommended that the trunks of downed trees should be allowed to decompose in the woods, and branches and limbs be chipped or placed in compact brush piles. Trees damaged in storms that are not hazardous should be left undisturbed to provide food and shelter for birds.

While the Subcommittee works to formulate its final recommendations to the Town Council, it is already clear that to realize the goals established when Porcupine Woods was first acquired by the town, removal of invasives will be a high priority. Phil observed that Porcupine Woods is now approximately 50 percent invasives, which means there were a lot of those red dots by the time the tour was complete. BTW, an “invasive,” according to Phil, is any plant that is so successful that it makes it impossible for other desirable plants to survive in the same space. Invasives result in a monoculture when they are allowed to grow undeterred.

To help the town gain a measure of control over invasives, he recommended some specific

Green Again

Thanks go to Leah Mazade for our November green banner. It took a while to catch up to you, but our thanks are heartfelt just the same! We’re now good for the winter months, but could use some green to help us welcome in spring 2013. If you would care to sponsor a green banner to go along with the blooming flowers, please make out a check to the Citizens Association for \$45, and mail it to me at Box 98. Many thanks.

Mary Moyer

steps for immediate/near-term implementation, including pruning and removals that will permit the white oak planted 19 years ago near the Clermont end of the park to thrive (the tree is a seedling of the historic Wye Oak); pruning and removals for safety and improved access to all parts of the woods; and to encourage more plant diversity, eliminating invasives such as Norway maples, kudzu, bush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, barberry, English ivy, and running bamboo.

As for the bamboo stand, Phil described it as a “green desert.” Nothing else will grow there because the bamboo blocks all light. It provides no habitat diversity or food for birds. However, eliminating bamboo will take time, persistence, money, and multiple approaches.

The walk was also about what can be planted to replace invasives and enrich the woods. For example, to provide the visual screen now offered by the bamboo, desirable evergreen trees and shrubs can be planted, providing “green texture” during the winter. In areas where Norway maples now reign, he recommended planting buckeyes and other flowering shrubs. In any case, a wider diversity of plants that are both deer resistant and noninvasive should be introduced.

Guided by the red dots, members of the subcommittee are removing some of the smaller Norway maples, bush honeysuckle, and other invasives marked for removal (volunteers are welcome to join them). They are also creating compact brush piles in a few out-of-the-way spots in the woods, which will provide needed protection for birds and other wildlife this winter, while returning nutrients to the soil as they decay. Phil’s parting comment to the group was, “For significant progress (in eliminating invasives and encouraging beneficials), we need to take drastic measures.” And once we have the right balance, maintenance must be routine and persistent.

Comments are welcome and can be given to any subcommittee member: Suzanne Grefsheim, Chris Keller, Frank O’Brinski, Cathy Rinzel, or Ken Schwartz.

Suzanne Grefsheim, Subcommittee Chair

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Bugle Notes . . . Sweet and Sour

- ♪ You may have noticed that the “No Turn on Red” sign is down from the stoplight arm at Kenilworth and Strathmore. Feel free to turn right on red after stopping and checking for pedestrians and cars. However, if you go straight or turn left, you are liable to get a ticket for going through a red light!
- ♪ Tim Derstine of Hare Valley Growers (our farmers market) has indicated that he will continue to come down here every week up through New Year’s. After that he’ll be down every other Saturday until springtime. You can get information from him via his e-mail: haresvalley@PCFreemail.com.
- ♪ Mandi Mader’s petition to move high school starting time to 8:15 or later (to promote better sleep and academic achievement for teens) has drawn attention in various quarters, including the *Washington Post*. WTOP’s story on the petition mentioned her as a “Garrett Park parent.” She has more than 8000 signatures so far. (If you’re interested, go to signon.org/sign/changing-montgomery-county.)
- ♪ From the PO: in order to get your packages to their destinations (non-international), you must mail them via First Class Mail by December 20, Priority Mail by December 21, and Express Mail by December 22. Christmas cards should also be sent by December 20 for arrival by December 25.
- ♪ Ann Baldwin Nucci got a letter from the Director of NIH congratulating her for her outstanding accomplishments and her selection to receive the OD (Office of the Director) Honor Award. Middle Baldwin daughter Sally is retiring at the end of December after 25 years in the International Monetary Fund. Eldest daughter Susan is a city planner in San Diego and seems to have no intention of retiring anytime soon.
- ♪ From the past: “Herman Hollerith leaves today for St. Petersburg. He will take charge of the work of obtaining the census of Russia. This great undertaking will be done by the use of tabulating machines, of which Mr. Hollerith is the inventor and whose use has been so successful in all the offices of the Erie and Central R. R. of New York.” From the *Montgomery Press*, Nov. 27, 1896. Mr. Hollerith lived at 11210 Kenilworth Avenue.
- ♪ Coming up in the new year: Large item collection on January 5, 2013, and the Town Dinner, January 26. More details later.

Women’s Club

Holiday Decorating Contest

Each year the Garrett Park Women’s Club sponsors a Holiday Decorating Contest, which will be judged at some time during the week before Christmas (hint: December 19), depending on the weather. Garrett Park is more beautiful every year. Here are the categories for the awards:

Best House	Best Yard
Best Porch	Kids’ Award
Most Creative	Most Charming
Green Award	Honorable Mention
Mayor’s Award	Best Door/Window

Winners will have a special sign placed on their lawn for all to see. Be sure to tour Garrett Park and view the wonder of our beautiful neighborhood. Signs will be in place until January 2, 2013.

Santa’s Visit to Town Hall

Santa’s coming to the Town Hall on Saturday, December 8! Your little one will enjoy singing holiday favorites with George Oakley from 2 to 2:45 pm. Santa arrives at 2:45 pm to visit—come early to share your list! If you would like to help or provide snacks, please contact Jean Horan. (This event is brought to you, as always, by the Women’s Club.)

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GIVES Soup Supper Raises \$1000 for Homeless

It was a feast. There were over 20 creative and delicious varieties of soup and at least 10 homemade breads. Safe to say that none of the 60 participants, ranging from 2 to 87 years old, went hungry at the GIVES Soup Supper on November 4. Personal donations at the event brought in over \$1000. The funds will be used to serve clients of Thrive DC and to support international programs of the American Friends Service Committee.

Thrive DC director Alicia Horton, who confessed to being a big fan of homemade soup, explained to the group that the photographs on

display at the Town Hall were taken by homeless clients as part of a local college student project to encourage documentation and reflection. She noted that several of the photographers have since found permanent homes, due in part to the confidence they developed. The photographs were matted and framed as a special thank you to Thrive DC by Rana Koll-Mandel.

If you missed the dinner but still would like to make an end-of-year donation, please send your check to Karen Anderson, GIVES Treasurer, at PO Box 129.

Letter from the Mayor

We dodged a bullet with super storm Sandy. To the best of my knowledge, not only did we not lose power in any part of town, but no tree or major limb fell on any of the town streets or electrical wires. Part of this was due to the storm's impact being less severe in our area than in other parts of the middle and northern Atlantic states. Part of what reduced the impact upon us was the excellent work done by Keith Mayhew and the Arboretum Committee, as well as our arborist Phil Normandy, in cooperation with Pepco's arborist and tree trimming contractors. The cooperation between the town and Pepco allowed a meaningful reduction of the risk of trees and limbs falling and hitting electrical wires, while avoiding the radical destruction of trees which we have observed elsewhere in the county. Thank you to both our town representatives and to Pepco for working together for the common good.

Speaking of utilities, we did hold the Town Council meeting with representatives of Pepco, Verizon, Comcast, Washington Gas, and WSSC, which I wrote about in my letter last month. We talked about how we can cooperate to allow the town to notify its residents about pending work that might affect them, coordinate the work to minimize disruptions, and preserve the streets that are repaved after work is completed. We received some commitments for enhanced communication with the town and more advance notice. But not all utilities seemed to get the full

message. Meanwhile, WSSC seems to have completed its maintenance work in the town and has left us with part of Cambria repaved, most of Montrose repaved, and Argyle fully repaved. We are sorry for the disruption that so many of the residents of those streets experienced during the work, but at least at this point we have newly paved streets at WSSC expense. Of course, immediately after repaving, WSSC was back to rip out part of its work to deal with a leak, and Washington Gas dug into new pavement to do gas pipe relining. We hope to improve that situation.

Last month I told you about the beginnings of a search for a new Town Administrator, as Ted retires next June. The Council has formed a search committee of Tara Flynn, Jack Mandel, and Hans Wegner to carry out the process. The Council also decided that it would be beneficial to hire a search firm to carry out parts of the effort in which our capabilities and experience are more limited. The full Council will interview the final candidates and will decide upon a new Town Administrator. We are also considering changing the position name to Town Manager.

Finally, I was pleased to see so many of you at the polls for our recent national election. Those of us who were responsible for carrying out the election apologize for the long waits, and are impressed with the number of voters who endured the lines in order to make their voices heard. Our precinct now stretches from Garrett Park to well north of Montrose Crossing shopping center, encompassing many new apartment and condo buildings. I have talked to the Board of Elections about increasing the number of pieces of equipment in our precinct to expedite voting, and to devise a better way to help persons with disabilities to deal with long lines. I hope that your next experience voting in Garrett Park will be faster and more comfortable.

Peter Benjamin

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Music with George Oakley
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Hot Chocolate and Cookies
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